Amendments to the Specification

In accordance with the Examiner's requirements, a double-spaced Specification is currently presented. Also, typographical errors found in the Specification are currently corrected. For identification purposes, paragraph references identifying replacement paragraphs are made to the originally filed (1 ½ spaced) Specification. The amendments are shown with deleted text in strikethrough format (e.g. <~~deletedtext~~>). New text is underlined.

Please replace paragraph 1 from page 2 with the following paragraph:

Traditional instruction occurs in many contexts, including formal courses, conferences, symposia, workshops, single presentations and the like. The growing popularity of the Internet has introduced a significant new tool of online learning for distributing instruction material that substantially improves the distribution of learning courses and reduces inconvenience for students of traditional contexts that also take advantage of the Internet. For instance, online learning management systems (LMS) have garnered considerable attention as a convenient forum for extending traditional course topics through the Internet. LMS courses follow structures traditionally found in face-to-face ("F2F") courses, such as syllabus, lesson, topic and sub-topic structures. However, online courses are not typically applied to learning and instruction in the many contexts that fall outside of traditional F2F courses such as conferences, symposia, workshops, presentations and the like. These learning "events" typically have different structures than formal courses, whether F2F or online, with a variety of contributors presenting information in flexible programs generally loosely structured to appeal to diverse audiences.

Please replace paragraph 4 from page 5 with the following paragraph:

In accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure, a system and method are provided that substantially <~~eliminates~~>eliminate or <~~reduces~~>reduce disadvantages and problems associated with previously developed systems and methods for presenting learning material. A distributed application service provider allows decentralized and dynamic creation of virtual events for presentation through the Internet in real time to meet specific presenter needs.

Please replace paragraph 3 beginning on page 12 with the following paragraph:

Referring now to FIGURE 1, a block diagram depicts the data context of a virtual event. A virtual event engine 10 collects content and loads the content in a database for authorized contributors for each virtual event. The initial authorization to create a virtual event begins with ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 which <~~30~~>authorizes an organization to access virtual event engine 10 through the Internet, manages the organization's use of virtual events, tracks and reviews organization virtual event details, and closes out and reconciles organization and individual virtual event accounts. ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 establishes financial constraints for an organization and secures the organization's agreement to comply with terms for use of the virtual event engine 10. ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 allows a central administrator to access information for each organization and each virtual event within virtual event engine 10 and establishes the application service provider templates used by contributors to upload content for virtual events. As depicted by FIGURE 1, ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 provides a series of templates through a browser interface that allows a central administrator to log in for secure access, establish new organizations, update organization information, and download reports. For billing purposes,

reports are output as web pages that are electronically transferable to organizations, such as by attachment to e-mails.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning on page 13 with the following paragraph:

ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 provides each authorized organization access to virtual event engine 10 through an organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14. Organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 decentralizes approval for individual virtual events so that a central authority at each organization is responsible for that organization's use of the system. Organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 provides a unique login for the central authority of the organization and allows the central authority to establish virtual event parameters for one or more virtual events. Virtual event parameters authorize the creation of individual virtual events, provides the central organization administrator the ability to modify existing virtual events and further decentralizes the creation of virtual events by allowing the organization administrator to create and manage event champions responsible for each individual event. Organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 displays to the organization administrator financial information, such as the number of virtual events currently authorized for the organization, enables paying attendees including the forms of payment, sponsors of the virtual event and their associated fees, and exhibitors of the virtual event and their associated fees. Organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 also enables the branding, or consistent look and feel, to be set for the organization's events. In addition, organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 displays links to allow the organization administrator to access existing virtual events.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning on page 14 with the following paragraph:

Referring now to FIGURE 2, a graphical user interface <~~28~~>presented by organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 is depicted. The organization administrator graphical user interface<~~28~~> provides authority for an organization administrator to authorize, or revoke event instances and identify an event champion to manage each event. For existing events, the administrator has authority to modify events and manage user access to the system including management of content loaded onto virtual event engine 10. In addition, the administrator has the ability to create reports that detail usage of the system by the organization, including costs and expenses. Graphical user interface <~~28~~>includes a communication navigation bar that supports direct electronic communication with event champion module 16.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning on page 15 with the following paragraph:

Referring again to FIGURE 1, event champions identified by organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 are given authority to access virtual event engine 10 through event champion module 16. Event champion module 16 provides secure login to virtual event engine 10, allows an event champion to establish event details, and authorizes the event champion to approve or disapprove content loaded into the event champion's associated virtual event. The event champion module 16 displays a graphical user interface that allows the event champion to define the structure of the virtual event in cooperation with a rapid event generator 17 associated with virtual event engine 10. The virtual event definition includes an anticipated number of attendees, the identification of content contributors, and time constraints for the availability of the virtual event. Event champion module 16 also establishes the types of presentation content for the virtual event, such as different types of multi-media content and the

types of attendees, such as access by the general public or a limited list of attendees, contribution file types for sponsors of the virtual event, and contribution file types for exhibitors of the virtual event. The rapid event generator 17 collects data and defines the virtual event structure through templates, and then stores the virtual event in a <~~data base~~>database 11.

Please replace paragraph 3 beginning on page 17 with the following paragraph:

An attendee module 22 provides a browser-based graphical user interface to support interaction of member attendees with the virtual event engine 10 when the members attend a virtual event. The member provides login information for the virtual event and then downloads event content by navigating with a browser through a web site associated with the virtual event. A learning management system module 26 can supplement the virtual event with other course information such as a workshop.

Please replace paragraph 3 beginning on page 18 with the following paragraph:

The present invention applies object-oriented techniques to establish a consistent data structure for the creation, presentation and archiving of virtual events. Virtual event engine 10 interacts with the interface module in a structure defined by object oriented use cases. By applying these use cases to generate browser - supported graphical user interfaces for display through the interface modules, data is stored in virtual event <~~data base~~>database 11 so that virtual events are built in a decentralized manner.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning on page 19 with the following paragraph:

Referring to FIGURE 6, a block diagram depicts use cases associated with ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 for interacting with virtual event database 11. Each use case represents object oriented programming structures that exchange objects with virtual event database 11 for interaction with virtual event engine 10. ASP administration log-on use case 30 provides an interface to accept log-in requests, authorize new members, authorize changes to member details, and to provide the ASP administrator with player data representing information on users of virtual event engine 10. Create organization use case 32 provides an ASP administrator with an interface to establish authorization for new organizations to access virtual event engine 10. Manage organization use case 34 provides an interface for the ASP administrator to update data on an existing organization. A generate reports use case 36 accepts data from virtual event database 11 and generates reports for usage and billing for organizations and virtual events, and provides those reports in an html or an exported report format for presentation to organizations. Closeout event use case 38 closes out events as they expire and arranges archiving of the events with reports to the ASP administrator. ASP administrator log-off use case 40 logs off an ASP administrator to ensure the integrity of the interface with virtual event engine 10.

Please replace paragraph 3 beginning on page 19 with the following paragraph:

Referring now to FIGURE 7, a block diagram depicts use cases associated with organization <~~administration~~>administrator module 14 for interacting with virtual event database 11. Organization administrator log-on use case 42 allows the organization administrator to log-in once approved by the ASP administrator, to identify new members for access to the

organizations data and virtual events, and to view details for members associated with the organization and its virtual events as well as for players active in a given virtual event. Create event instance use case 44 provides an interface for the organization administrator to authorize the creation of a new virtual event and to identify an event champion with authority to access and create the virtual events. In addition, create event instance use case 44 establishes the scope of the virtual event, including the attendees and payment for the virtual event, and a beginning and ending time for the virtual event. Virtual events having a duration of greater than a predetermined time, such as two weeks, are subject to approval by the organization administrator and/or the ASP administrator in order to avoid the presence of excessive numbers of virtual events active on the virtual event engine, which could result in slower performance as the database and band width are consumed. Manage event instance use case 46 provides the organization administrator with the ability to manage events created and otherwise managed by specific event champions. Revoke event instance use case 48 provides the organization administrator with an interface to revoke existing events, thus removing access to the event by the event champion. Modify event branding use case 50 provides the organization administrator with an interface to establish and modify branding information for virtual events associated with the organization. This branding capability allows an organization to have consistent market branding information associated with all of its virtual events. Organization administrator log-off use case 52 ensures system integrity by allowing an organization administrator to log-off of the virtual event engine. However, ASP <~~administration~~>administrator module 12 provides the ASP administrator with the capability to perform all of the functions of the organization administrator for redundancy and security.